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NPS Form 10-900 OMB No. 1024-0018 (Expires 5/31/2012)

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NAT. REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form.* If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. **Place additional certification comments, entries, and narrative items on continuation sheets if needed (NPS Form 10-900a).**

1. Name of Property

historic name Kessler, William and Margot (Walbrecker), House

other names/site number N/A

2. Location

street & number 1013 Cadieux Road ☐ not for publication

city or town Gross Pointe Park ☐ vicinity

state Michigan code MI county Wayne code 163 zip code 48230

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,

I hereby certify that this _X_ nomination ___ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.

In my opinion, the property _X_ meets ___ does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

___ national _X_ statewide ___local

Brian D Conway 8/9/13
Signature of certifying official/Title Date

MI SHPO
State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

In my opinion, the property ___ meets ___ does not meet the National Register criteria.

Signature of commenting official Date

Title State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

✓ entered in the National Register ___ determined eligible for the National Register

___ determined not eligible for the National Register ___ removed from the National Register

___ other (explain:)

for Edson H. Beall 9.30.13
Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(Check as many boxes as apply.)

☒ private
☐ public - Local
☐ public - State
☐ public - Federal

Category of Property
(Check only one box.)

☒ building(s)
☐ District
☐ Site
☐ Structure
☐ Object

Number of Resources within Property
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1	0	buildings
0	0	sites
0	0	structures
0	0	objects
1	0	**Total**

Name of related multiple property listing
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)

N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

N/A

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions.)

DOMESTIC/Single dwelling

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions.)

DOMESTIC/Single dwelling

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions.)

MODERN MOVEMENT

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions.)

foundation: CONCRETE BLOCK
walls: BRICK – buff brick in a running bond
Glazed curtain wall with steel frame
WOOD – vertically oriented boards
roof Built-up roof over 4" structural wood deck
other:

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance of the property. Explain contributing and noncontributing resources if necessary. Begin with **a summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, setting, size, and significant features.)

Summary Paragraph

The William H. Kessler House is a one-story residence with fully glazed curtain walls on the front and rear elevations and brick masonry side walls. The house, which is roughly square in plan, has a distinctive three-bay, folded-plate roof and a tall brick garden wall that screens the transparent façade from the street. Constructed in 1959, the Kessler home is a notable example of Modern residential architecture designed by William H. Kessler for himself and his family. The glass window walls are supported by a thin steel frame and the glazing is extended up into the gables producing a dramatic effect and enhancing the modern aesthetic. The folded-plate roof is comprised of 4" thick structural wood decking eliminating the need for an exposed truss system. The buff brick garden wall at the front of the house encloses a linear courtyard along the primary elevation. The northwest and southeast-facing side walls are clad with buff brick capped with a wood fascia set just below the roofline. The house's main entrance is located in the center of the southeast elevation. A flat roof extends over the entry to a small rectangular storage shed clad with vertical wood boards. To the north of the storage shed is a two-vehicle carport with a flat roof that was designed by Kessler and added in 1964.

The interior of the house contains approximately 1,700 square feet of living space on one floor. The basement is an open unfinished space used for storage, laundry and utilities. The open plan of the first floor and the large window walls facing two directions provide natural light into the interior and allow expansive views of the private courtyard and rear yard. Several original pieces of furniture designed by Kessler remain in the house.

The Kessler House is located on a .31-acre residential lot on the southeast side of Grosse Pointe Park directly across Cadieux Road from the Beaumont Hospital parking lot. The lot is generally flat and the house is set back from the street in a similar manner to its neighbors. The property contains a number of mature trees and two large shrubs on the front lawn. A few remnants of the original landscape plan remain present in the backyard.

Narrative Description

Setting

The Kessler House is located on Cadieux Road, a tree-lined residential street connecting East Jefferson Avenue with Kercheval Street and Mack Avenue to the northwest. Directly across Cadieux Road from the Kessler House is the Beaumont Hospital parking lot. The hospital was established in the 1940s by the Sisters of Bon Secours and then purchased by Beaumont Health System in 2007.

With the exception of the medical center, which has grown to encompass the entire block, new development in the area has been limited. The neighborhood, known originally as the C. H. Haberkorn Grosse Pointe Park Subdivision, largely retains its original character. The houses along Cadieux Road and the adjacent streets consist mainly of traditional revivalist style homes and thus the distinctly modern Kessler House stands out among its neighbors. Styles present within the neighborhood include Cape Cod cottages, Colonial Revival, Georgian Revival, and Tudor/English Revival. The subdivision is named for C. H. Haberkorn, who owned C. H. Haberkorn & Co., a company that manufactured high-grade furniture and automobile accessories. Haberkorn also developed real estate in and around Detroit. The neighborhood is laid out on a grid system with moderate-sized rectangular lots lining two-lane residential streets.

Kessler prepared the site drawings for his house from a survey completed by the McMahon Engineering Company. The house is set back approximately 35' from the sidewalk on a 0.31-acre rectangular lot. The topography of the site is relatively flat and the house is located in the center of the parcel. A number of mature trees and shrubs are located in front of the house and along the edges of the property. The siting of the residence behind the vegetation and brick screen wall provides a buffer from the street and the activity of the hospital complex. The house is accessed by an asphalt-paved drive that extends from Cadieux Road to the open carport. The carport was added by Kessler in 1964. Large stone pavers extend from the driveway to a covered breezeway between the house and a small storage structure. A small landscaped courtyard raised slightly above the elevation of the driveway is located between the carport and the house. The main entrance, a purple flush wood door with large sidelights, is centered on the northwest elevation within the open breezeway. The rear wall of the breezeway contains an art piece designed by Kessler and installed in 2001. The piece is comprised of a series of brightly colored glass disks affixed to the wall. Remnants of the original landscape plan designed by Kessler and Carl D. Johnson (later of Johnson, Johnson & Roy) remain present including a linear patio built with square stone pavers centered on the rear elevation and flanked by beds of low ground cover and small shrubs. An open lawn area exists behind the carport and plantings around the perimeter of the property provide privacy to the back yard. There are no outbuildings on the property.

Exterior

Northeast Elevation
The house is oriented so that the window walls generally face northeast and southwest to take advantage of natural day lighting and allow expansive views of the rear yard and garden court. The significant overhang of the folded-plate roof provides shade from the direct sun and shelters the window walls from rain and snow. Water dams are incorporated in the gable valleys along the rear elevation to control the rainwater run-off. An approximately 7' tall buff brick running bond screen wall extends 15' from the southeast corner of the house and then turns ninety degrees and extends along the full length of the facade. The wall is tall enough to provide complete privacy but low enough to allow natural light to filter into the interior spaces. The coursing of the masonry screen wall has a patterned effect that is achieved by projecting every third brick ¾" from the face of the wall. The wall is set approximately 15' from the house providing space for a garden court. Originally the courtyard was to be left open at its northwest end; however, it was enclosed shortly after construction with a wood wall containing a gate for access. The window wall contains a single aluminum door in the central bay and casement windows in the flanking bays. A flat-roof breezeway with exposed framing covers the primary entrance to the residence along the northwest façade. The wall along the rear of the breezeway was originally designed to be an open screen of widely spaced vertical members; however, it has since been clad with solid painted plywood. Attached to this wall is an art installation that, designed by Kessler in 2001, consists of a series of brightly colored circular glass disks. The art piece provides a focal point to welcome visitors as they proceed toward the entry. The storage room is clad with 1"x3" vertical wood siding. The open, two-vehicle wood-frame carport has a flat roof and is clad with tongue-and-groove vertical siding on the exterior and ¼" plywood on the interior. The interior of the carport is painted black.

Southeast Elevation
The southeast elevation is a buff brick-clad wall that contains a steel casement window over a fixed glass pane in the center of the elevation. The top of the brick garden court wall is aligned with the brick of the main house. An expansion joint separates the garden court wall from the main house to allow the structures to move independently. The brick veneer wall does not extend to the underside of the eave but instead is held back and topped with a wide wood fascia. Terminating the brick in this manner enhances the "lightness" of the roof and gives the impression that it is floating above the structure. A downspout located on the western end of the elevation carries water from the box gutter on the roof to the tile drain below grade. A through-wall air-conditioning unit located on each side of the central window has been installed to provide air-conditioning to the bedrooms.

Southwest Elevation
The rear or southwest-facing elevation is a fully glazed window wall identical to that found on the northeast elevation. The window wall contains a wide aluminum door in the central bay and steel casement windows in each of the adjacent bays. The casement windows are painted black while the rest of the steel and aluminum frame is painted white. The rear of the storage room and carport are clad similarly in 1"x3" vertical wood siding. A single doorway provides access from the carport to the backyard.

Northwest Elevation
The northwest elevation is similar to the southeast elevation in that it is clad with buff-colored running bond brick topped by a wood fascia that separates the overhanging roof from the façade. The brightly painted flush wood entry door, with an integral vertical mail-slot, is located in the center of this elevation beneath the flat roof that extends from the house to the storage shed. Two large, floor-to-ceiling sidelights flank the sides of the entry door. A downspout on the western end of the façade carries water from the box gutter to the drain tile below grade. The floor of the breezeway is a concrete slab on the grade that extends between the house and the storage shed.

Interior
The interior of the house contains approximately 1,700 square feet of living space on the first floor, including three bedrooms, two bathrooms, a kitchen, living room, dining room and children's play area or family room. The basement is an unfinished space used for storage, laundry and utility equipment. Kessler would occasionally use the basement to paint. The home's open plan is organized around a central utility core with few dividing walls in the living spaces. The bedrooms are grouped along the southwest wall of the house and separated from the main living spaces by a plaster partition. The

kitchen, bathrooms and a coat closet are located in the center of the plan. From the main entry, visitors can be directed to the more formal living room to the left or the dining room and family room to the right. A small powder room and coat closet are located directly in front of the entry. The floor of the entry, which was originally specified as resilient tile, is covered with a purple rug. Similarly, some of the other public and private living spaces, including the family room, hall, bedrooms, and living room that were originally finished with a 25/32" oak wood floor, have been covered with carpet. The ceiling consists of 4"x6" cedar, striated planks with a natural finish. The ceiling extends seamlessly from the interior over the window wall framing to the exterior to form the soffit. This further enhances the perceived connection between the interior and the exterior. The light-colored plaster walls connect to the undulating natural wood ceiling at angles creating a pleasant geometric aesthetic. During construction, the wood stud walls were temporarily braced while the wood roof deck was installed. The architectural drawings state the roof deck is mitered at its high and low points to "ensure proper fitting." All of the interior doors are made of painted birch and the hardware has a brushed chrome finish. The doors are surrounded with thin wood trim that is painted black, similar to that at the base of the walls. Registers penetrate the floor to supply heat to the interior spaces.

The living room along the northeast elevation is provided views of the garden court and natural light through the full-height glass wall. A tubular-shaped wall sconce with a white finish, manufactured by Gotham, and several modern lamps provide light to the space. Gotham was founded in 1938 to produce lighting for the growing trend of electric lamps and modern minimalist lighting fixtures. The room is furnished with several modern pieces of furniture, some of which were designed by Kessler for the home. The floor of the living room is covered with light-colored carpet.

The open dining room is located adjacent to the entry and provides views of the backyard through the southwest-facing window wall. Three original tubular-shaped pendent light fixtures hang from the ceiling to light the dining area. A long credenza designed by Kessler separates the dining room from the family room. A single, glazed aluminum door in the curtain wall provides access to the rear yard from the family room. Built-in adjustable shelves provide storage along the interior wall. The family room is lit with a set of two double conical-shaped wall sconces. Light-colored carpet covers the floor in both the dining room and the family room.

The kitchen, located in the center of the plan, is open to both the living room and the dining/family room and contains a large Wasco Sky Dome skylight in its sloping ceiling. Wasco manufactured the Wascolite Sky Dome, which was first introduced in 1951, as an aesthetically pleasing, practical solution for bringing natural daylight into buildings. The kitchen is connected to the living room by a single doorway; however, a larger opening has been created between the kitchen and dining room. This opening is framed with an overhead steel tube member and intermediate steel post. The lower cabinets cantilever into the opening creating an interesting arrangement. The kitchen contains most of its original finishes and some original equipment. The southwest wall contains a bank of custom plywood cabinets with brightly colored pink and orange doors. The upper cabinet doors are unique in that they don't have any hardware and open by lifting the bottom of the door, which tips back and rests on the top of the unit. The stainless steel sink contrasts with the white Formica countertops. The lower cabinets are white and open with simple metal pulls. A refrigerator, oven and additional storage are incorporated into the northwest wall. The floor, which was originally clad in resilient tile, has been recovered with gray vinyl tiles.

The powder room adjacent to the entry is a small rectangular space that contains a single lavatory and sink. A small closet adjacent to the powder room provides storage. The family bathroom, located across from the bedrooms, has a lavatory and vanity with a black Formica counter top and multi-colored cabinet doors. There is a mirror on the southwest wall, toilet on the northwest wall and bathtub on the northeast wall. Small 1"x1" black square ceramic tiles cover the floor and portions of the wall. A plastic rectangular-shaped sky-dome penetrates the roof to provide natural light to the bathroom. Recessed lighting fixtures manufactured by Prescolite were used to light the space. Prescolite was founded in 1944 to produce residential lighting.

The hallway that connects the three bedrooms contains two conical-shaped light fixtures. Built-in shelving at the end of the hallway adjacent to the master bedroom provides space for linen storage. The bedroom in the southwest corner has a custom, built-in desk with shelves and a sliding-door cabinet above. Half of the northeast wall contains a closet and the adjacent bedroom uses the other half of the closet on the opposite wall. The master bedroom is larger than the other bedrooms and contains a large double-door closet along its southwest wall.

The basement is a partially finished space accessed by a stair located between the kitchen and the small bathroom near the entrance. Three small windows with areaways located on the northwest and southeast walls provide natural light and ventilation to the basement. The original plans show the basement included a utility sink, washer and dryer, gas-fired furnace, hot water heater, and electric panel. Kessler also included a waste and vent pipe for a future lavatory and water closet in the original design. The house rests on a 4" concrete slab over sand fill and a 12" solid concrete block foundation wall with a 20"x10" continuous strip footing. Four 36"x36"x16" footings support 3" pipe columns in the center of the basement.

The storage shed is a 4'-6" x 9'-1½" wood frame structure that is clad with vertical wood boards and has a concrete floor. The exposed wood stud ceiling is 7'-1½" in height. The 1964 carport is a 21'x 24'-11" structure that has an asphalt-covered concrete floor and an exposed wood joist ceiling. The interior is clad in ¼" exterior grade plywood that has been painted black.

Alterations
Alterations to the original design are discussed in the narratives above but are primarily limited to the installation of the wood wall to enclose the northwest end of the courtyard and the construction of the carport in 1964. These modifications were designed by Kessler and built under his direction.

The minor changes made to the interior are generally limited to the replacement of floor finishes.

Outbuildings
There are no outbuildings on the property.

Integrity
The Kessler House has not experienced any significant changes to its original form, plan or materials and appears today much as it did when it was constructed in 1959. The very minor changes and additions that were made over time were executed by the original owner and architect and do not diminish the overall understanding of the architecture.

The setting of the Kessler House has been changed slightly by the expansion of the hospital parking lot to encompass the entire block across Cadieux Road from the property. When the house was constructed there were single-family residences along both sides of Cadieux Road in the vicinity of the Kessler property.

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria
(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

☐ A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.

☒ B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.

☒ C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.

☐ D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations
(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

☐ A Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.

☐ B removed from its original location.

☐ C a birthplace or grave.

☐ D a cemetery.

☐ E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.

☐ F a commemorative property.

☐ G less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance
(Enter categories from instructions.)

Architecture

Period of Significance

1958-1959

Significant Dates

1959

Significant Person
(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

William Kessler

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

William Kessler – Architect
Carl D. Johnson – Landscape Architect
H. C. Smith – Contractor

Period of Significance (justification)
The period of significance for the Kessler House is established as 1958-59. This period is inclusive of the original design and construction of the house.

Criteria Considerations (explanation, if necessary)

Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance and applicable criteria.)

The William and Margot (Walbreaker) Kessler House is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places under Criteria B and C at the state level as a notable example of the Modern Movement and for its association with architect William Kessler. The Kessler House was designed by Harvard-trained architect William H. Kessler for himself and his family in the early stages of his career, a few years after establishing an architectural practice with Philip J. Meathe and Harry Smith in 1955 (Meathe, Kessler & Associates). Built in 1959, the Kessler House possesses significance in the category of Architecture as an innovative residential design exhibiting the fundamental characteristics of the Modern Movement including its simple geometric form, use of large expanses of glass to bring nature and sunlight into the interior, and its open and free-flowing floor plan. The house is also distinctive for its folded-plate roof supported on a thin steel frame and the incorporation of a brick screen wall on the primary street-facing façade. Despite Kessler's intention to live and work in Michigan for only a few years, he remained in the state for his entire career developing a successful private practice and contributing significantly to Michigan's architectural legacy during the Modern and Post-Modern eras. Kessler was elected to the College of Fellows of the American Institute of Architects (AIA) in 1968 for his outstanding contributions to the profession and has been referred to as one of Detroit's greatest modernists. During the second half of the twentieth century, Kessler designed many of Detroit's most recognizable buildings and his work has received numerous awards and citations. The Kessler House relates to the historic context *Modernism in Michigan.*

Narrative Statement of Significance (Provide at least **one** paragraph for each area of significance.)

The William and Margot Kessler House is significant as a notable example of Modern residential architecture and for its association with architect William Kessler. Affectionately referred to by the family as "the chateau on Cadieux," the 1,700 sf home was designed by Kessler for himself, his wife and two children a few years after establishing an architectural practice, Meathe, Kessler & Associates, with Philip J. Meathe and Harry Smith in 1955. Kessler left his teaching position at Harvard University in the early 1950s after being recruited by Minoru Yamasaki to come to Michigan and work as a designer in Yamasaki's new and growing firm, Leinweber, Yamasaki & Hellmuth, headquartered in Detroit. Kessler is among a number of talented young design professionals that were attracted to the state during the mid-twentieth century. The prosperity and atmosphere of creativity and innovation that was being fueled by the automotive and furniture industries, as well as the presence within the state of academic institutions like Cranbrook and the University of Michigan and important modernist architects like Minoru Yamasaki, Eero Saarinen, and J. Robert F. Swanson made Michigan an attractive destination for young designers. Originally from Pennsylvania, Kessler received his architectural training at the Chicago Institute of Design and Harvard's Graduate School of Design studying under several pioneers of the Modern Movement including Laszlo Moholy-Nagy, Serge Chermayeff, R. Buckminster Fuller and Walter Gropius. Despite his intention to work in Michigan for only a few years, Kessler remained in the state for his entire career, developing a successful private practice and contributing significantly to Michigan's architectural legacy during the Modern and Post-Modern eras.

Criterion C
Architecture

Constructed in 1959, the Kessler House is a significant residential work that exhibits the fundamental characteristics of the Modern Movement. The design of the house generally adheres to the Miesian principles of structural clarity and the creation of conspicuous space defined by transparent walls set between opaque floor and roof planes. However, where Mies used simple box forms with flat roofs, Kessler instead chose to bring visual interest to the roof by utilizing dramatic and expressionist forms like the folded plate. Kessler's three-bay, folded-plate roof design is further enhanced by the continuation of the glazed walls up into the gable ends, the cantilevering of the roof plane beyond the exterior window walls and the elimination of exposed structural elements on the interior. Kessler achieves this by using 4" x 6" cedar, tongue-and-groove structural decking supported on light steel frame members, which allows large open spans without the need for a roof truss system or intermediate support. Kessler's emphasis of the roof form is a signature of his early work and can be seen in several residential commissions he designed during this period like the Shwayder House (1958) where he incorporated a low arced roof set over a transparent box form and also in the Arthur Beckwith House (1960) where he further refined the folded-plate design and created a sawtooth effect by partially filling in and inverting the triangular gable ends. His interest in the triangular form during this period is further evidenced by its incorporation into the design of the Meathe, Kessler & Associates logo which consisted of a series of overlapping triangles that loosely references these innovative roof forms.

Another unique aspect of Kessler's design is the incorporation of a solid brick garden wall and courtyard along the front elevation of the house. The brick wall is used to screen the transparent façade from the street and to provide a private outdoor space adjacent to the primary living area and master bedroom. This unique feature brings attention to the house and sets it apart from its traditional revivalist style neighbors. Originally the courtyard was not fully enclosed but only had three sides and was left open at its northwestern end, adjacent to the driveway and entry court. According to Kessler's daughter, the courtyard was enclosed with a wood wall to comply with building code requirements.

Elements of Kessler's design like the folded-plate roof and the screen wall are features that are seen in other commercial and residential projects from the period; however, it has also been suggested that their incorporation may have been inspired by work that Minoru Yamasaki, Kessler's former employer, was producing at the time. Yamasaki's design of the Arts and Crafts Building (1957) at the College for Creative Studies in Detroit features a transparent structure concealed behind a two-story brick screen wall. Also his highly publicized design for the American Concrete Institute offices (1958) in Detroit incorporates a dramatic folded-plate roof as well as a low masonry screen wall (which has since been removed).

The design of Kessler's home is also distinctive for its careful planning and arrangement of interior spaces to produce an open yet "zoned" floor plan that provides separation between the public and private spaces. The primary living areas extend along the front and rear elevations and are separated by a central core that contains the kitchen, bathrooms, storage and basement stairs. The living room along the front of the house opens onto the private courtyard while the dining room and family room or children's play area open onto the rear yard. The placement of the kitchen and bathrooms in a central core and the lack of partitions and structural elements allow the main living areas to read as a single open space and to flow into one another without interruption. The creation of the utility core is consistent with Miesian design principles and also resulted in efficiencies that reduced the cost of construction. A March 1961 article in *Architectural Record* featuring the Kessler House entitled "A Lot of House for a Low Budget" highlights Kessler's ability to design his innovative, spacious and comfortable residence with what was at the time a modest budget.

Finally, Kessler's artistic sensibilities are demonstrated through his careful and strategic use of bold colors on the interior and also in the artwork and furnishings he designed specifically for the house. Kessler selected his favorite color for the front door (purple) and also incorporated splashes of bright color on the cabinet doors within the kitchen and family bathroom. The sculptural art piece Kessler designed in 2001, after forty years of living in the home, adds interest to the entry court. Several original furniture pieces he designed specifically for the home, including a credenza, sofa and several side tables, remain in their original locations.

William Kessler lived in the house on Cadieux Road until his death in 2002.

Criterion B
Significant Person

William Kessler was born December 15, 1924, in Reading, Pennsylvania. His family lived in Wyomissing, a suburb of Reading that was originally planned by landscape architect and civic planner Elbert Peets. Kessler was born into an affluent family that owned a successful lumber and building materials supply business, the Central Lumber Company, in Reading. In the mid-1930s Kessler's father, Fred H. Kessler, conceived a business plan to consolidate the buying power of several large lumber companies (many of whom were direct competitors) to take advantage of the discounts and efficiencies that "group buying" would provide. He approached several companies throughout Pennsylvania and, together with James Buckley, established the Lumberman's Merchandising Corporation (LMC). LMC is still in business today with 365 stockholder companies and a sales volume of over two billion dollars a year.

Kessler attended Wyomissing High School where he developed an appreciation for art. He began painting at an early age and for several years submitted his works to the "Young America Paints" exhibition organized by the Museum of Natural History and Art in New York. While still in high school he was encouraged by one of his teachers to pursue his artistic interests and enrolled at the Chicago Institute of Design (organized in 1937 as the New Bauhaus). He entered the school intending to pursue an education in art and photography. While at school his interests were expanded to include sculpture and industrial design. Realizing that architecture combined many of his interests he switched programs. In 1942 he attended a six-week summer course at Somonauk, Illinois, where he became acquainted with the architecture faculty. This relationship is evidenced by a wonderful candid photograph of Laszlo Moholy-Nagy and Serge Chermanoff taken by Kessler and held in the Institute's archives. Kessler's education was interrupted when he enlisted in the army during World War II. He was stationed near Omaha, Nebraska, where he trained as a pilot. As he was preparing for duty overseas, the war ended. He was discharged from the military and shortly thereafter he married Margot Walbrecker, his childhood sweetheart, whom he had grown up with in Wyomissing.

Following his marriage, Kessler returned to Chicago to resume his education. He graduated in 1948 with a BA in architecture from the Chicago Institute of Design. According to Kessler, Laszlo Moholy-Nagy, Gyorgy Kepes, Serge Chermayeff, and Richard Filipowski were his primary influences while at the Institute of Design. Filipowski, of whom Kessler was particularly fond, was a sculptor who went on to teach at M.I.T. Recognizing Kessler's talents, the faculty at the Institute encouraged him to continue his architectural education under Walter Gropius at Harvard. Kessler attended the Graduate School of Design for three years, graduating with a Bachelor of Architecture in 1950. Upon graduation he was asked by Walter Gropius to stay on at the school as an instructor, which he did for about a year. While still in Cambridge he was recruited by Minoru Yamasaki to move to Detroit and join Leinweber, Yamasaki & Hellmuth as a designer. Kessler moved to Michigan and was assigned to work on the design of several new facilities for the Grosse Pointe University School in Grosse Pointe Woods.

Yamasaki is described in Michigan's statewide context on Modernism as one of seven important "epicenters" that contributed to the advancement and dissemination of Modernism in Michigan during the mid-century. Yamasaki, who grew up and was educated in Washington state, came to Michigan from New York in 1945 as chief designer for the Detroit architectural firm of Smith, Hinchman & Grylls. By 1949 Yamasaki established his own practice with George Hellmuth and Joseph Leinweber, who had also left Smith, Hinchman & Grylls. In the early 1950s, during the time Kessler was employed by the firm, Yamasaki received several important commissions including an update to the Wayne State University master plan, the Pruitt-Igoe housing project in St. Louis, and the U. S. consulate in Kobe, Japan.

Although it was Kessler's intention to remain in Michigan for only a few years, he stayed on with the Yamasaki firm for about five years as he wanted to see the Grosse Pointe University School project through to completion. Putting his plans to leave Michigan aside, Kessler made the decision to establish an independent practice and joined with fellow Yamasaki employee Philip Meathe to form Meathe, Kessler & Associates. Meathe, who was Director of Production for Yamasaki, brought a strong business sense and background in management to the practice while Kessler would oversee design. Initially, because Meathe was interested in pursuing design-build opportunities, Harry Smith, a residential builder and developer, was brought on as a partner in the new firm. The firm did not realize much success in this market area and Smith left after only a few years. During their first years of operation, the firm relied heavily on residential commissions with close to half (41%) of their work coming from this market sector in their first year of business. Because Meathe and Kessler left Yamasaki's firm on good terms, occasionally Yamasaki would refer clients to the small upstart firm. A number of their early residential designs received AIA citations and the firm's reputation began to grow. This resulted in the firm pursuing larger, more complex projects including commercial, education and public housing work. As work increased for the firm, staff was added by hiring employees from Yamasaki's office and by attracting young emerging talent from the University of Michigan. It was during this period of growth that Kessler designed his home on Cadieux Road. By 1965 residential commissions accounted for only1% of the firm's work.

One of the firm's early successes was the design of the Mount Clemens Public Housing project (1960) for which they won a national AIA award. More importantly, however, the firm received national exposure and was subsequently invited to submit proposals for similar projects throughout the state and across the country. The Mount Clemens project was recognized for the "human quality" of the design and also incorporated a folded-plate or undulating roof form. The firm went on to design several other housing projects including the City of Wayne Public Housing complex and another public housing project in Oberlin, Ohio (1964).

In the early and mid-1960s the firm expanded its practice to include more commercial, educational and institutional work. Projects completed during this period include design of the Mount Clements Savings and Loan building (1961), and master planning and the design of several buildings on the campuses of Grand Valley State University and Olivet College in

Michigan and the State University of New York, Stony Brook, Long Island. In 1968, however, the same year Kessler was named a Fellow of the American Institute of Architects, Kessler and Meathe dissolved their partnership. Kessler established an independent practice, William Kessler Associates, and Philip Meathe went on to work with Smith, Hinchman & Grylls, where he would eventually become president of the firm.

Kessler's practice continued to realize success over the next several decades largely based on his reputation as a talented designer. The 1970s marked a period of transition for the firm as the practice expanded into the historic preservation market and established a niche restoring historic theaters. The firm completed historic theater restoration projects all over the country and received numerous awards for their work. Throughout the 1970s and 1980s the Kessler firm designed a number of significant projects throughout Michigan including the Center for Creative Studies (1975), the Coleman Young Recreation Center (1976), the Detroit Science Center (1978), the Detroit Receiving Hospital (1980) in Detroit and the State of Michigan Library and Historical Center Building (1988) in Lansing. Outside of the state, the firm also completed major projects including design of the School of Public Health at Harvard University and the WPRI-TV building in Rhode Island. William Kessler & Associates was recognized for its design work receiving over fifty AIA awards including the prestigious Bartlet Award acknowledging Kessler's effort to eliminate barriers to the handicapped in his design of the Center for Creative Studies.

William Kessler Associates became, Kessler, Francis, Cardoza Architects (KFCA) when the firm was reorganized in 1999. Three years later, at the age 77, William Kessler died. The Kessler, Francis, Cardoza firm ceased operations in 2004.

Developmental history/additional historic context information (if appropriate)

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography (Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form.)

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Zabalbeascoa, Anatxu, The House of the Architect, Rizzoli International Publications, New York, 1995.

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

____preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67 has been requested)
____previously listed in the National Register
____previously determined eligible by the National Register
____designated a National Historic Landmark
____recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey #__________
____recorded by Historic American Engineering Record #__________
____recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey #__________

Primary location of additional data:

____State Historic Preservation Office
____Other State agency
____Federal agency
____Local government
____University
____Other
Name of repository: __________

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): __________

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property .31 acres
(Do not include previously listed resource acreage.)

UTM References
(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
1	17	342320	4693910	3			
2				4			

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

Property ID# 39-002-01-0003-000

PKG3 LOT 3 C. H. HABERKORN'S GROSSE PTE PARK SUB PCS 564, 585 L28 P71 WCR

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The boundaries include the entire .31 acre residential parcel. The house and full extent of the landscape features that contribute to the setting are included within this boundary.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Rob Yallop
organization Lord, Aeck & Sargent Architecture date August 2012
street & number 213 South Ashley Street telephone 734-827-3930
city or town Ann Arbor state MI zip code 48104
e-mail ryallop@lasarchitect.com

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

  A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.

- **Continuation Sheets**

- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items.)

Photographs:

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map.

Name of Property: Kessler, William and Margot (Walbrecker), House

City or Vicinity: Grosse Pointe Park

County: Wayne State: MI

Photographer: Rob Yallop, Lord, Aeck & Sargent Architecture

Date Photographed: Exteriors taken June 2011, Interiors taken July 2012.

Description of Photograph(s) and number:

1 of 17	View of the Kessler House looking southwest from Cadieux Road. MI_WayneCounty_KesslerHouse_0001.tif
2 of 17	View of Kessler House looking southwest. MI_WayneCounty_KesslerHouse_0002.tif
3 of 17	View Kessler House looking northwest with brick courtyard wall in foreground. MI_WayneCounty_KesslerHouse_0003.tif
4 of 17	View of rear elevation looking southeast. MI_WayneCounty_KesslerHouse_0004.tif
5 of 17	View of rear elevation looking east. MI_WayneCounty_KesslerHouse_0005.tif

6 of 17	View of rear elevation looking northeast. MI_WayneCounty_KesslerHouse_0006.tif
7 of 17	View along south wall of house. MI_WayneCounty_KesslerHouse_0007.tif
8 of 17	View of entry door on north elevation. MI_WayneCounty_KesslerHouse_0008.tif
9 of 17	View of artwork by Kessler on west wall of entry porch. MI_WayneCounty_KesslerHouse_0009.tif
10 of 17	View of main entry door. MI_WayneCounty_KesslerHouse_0010.tif
11 of 17	View of entry foyer looking west towards Dining Room. MI_WayneCounty_KesslerHouse_0011.tif
12 of 17	View of Living Room looking southeast. MI_WayneCounty_KesslerHouse_0012.tif
13 of 17	View of Living Room looking northeast. MI_WayneCounty_KesslerHouse_0013.tif
14 of 17	View of Kitchen with skylight. MI_WayneCounty_KesslerHouse_0014.tif
15 of 17	. View of built-in desk in children's bedroom. MI_WayneCounty_KesslerHouse_0015.tif
16 of 17	View of Master Bedroom. MI_WayneCounty_KesslerHouse_0016.tif
17 of 17	View of credenza designed by William Kessler located between the Dining Room and Play Room. MI_WayneCounty_KesslerHouse_0017.tif

Property Owner:

(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

name Scott Kurashige and Emily Lawsin

street & number 1013 Cadieux Road telephone

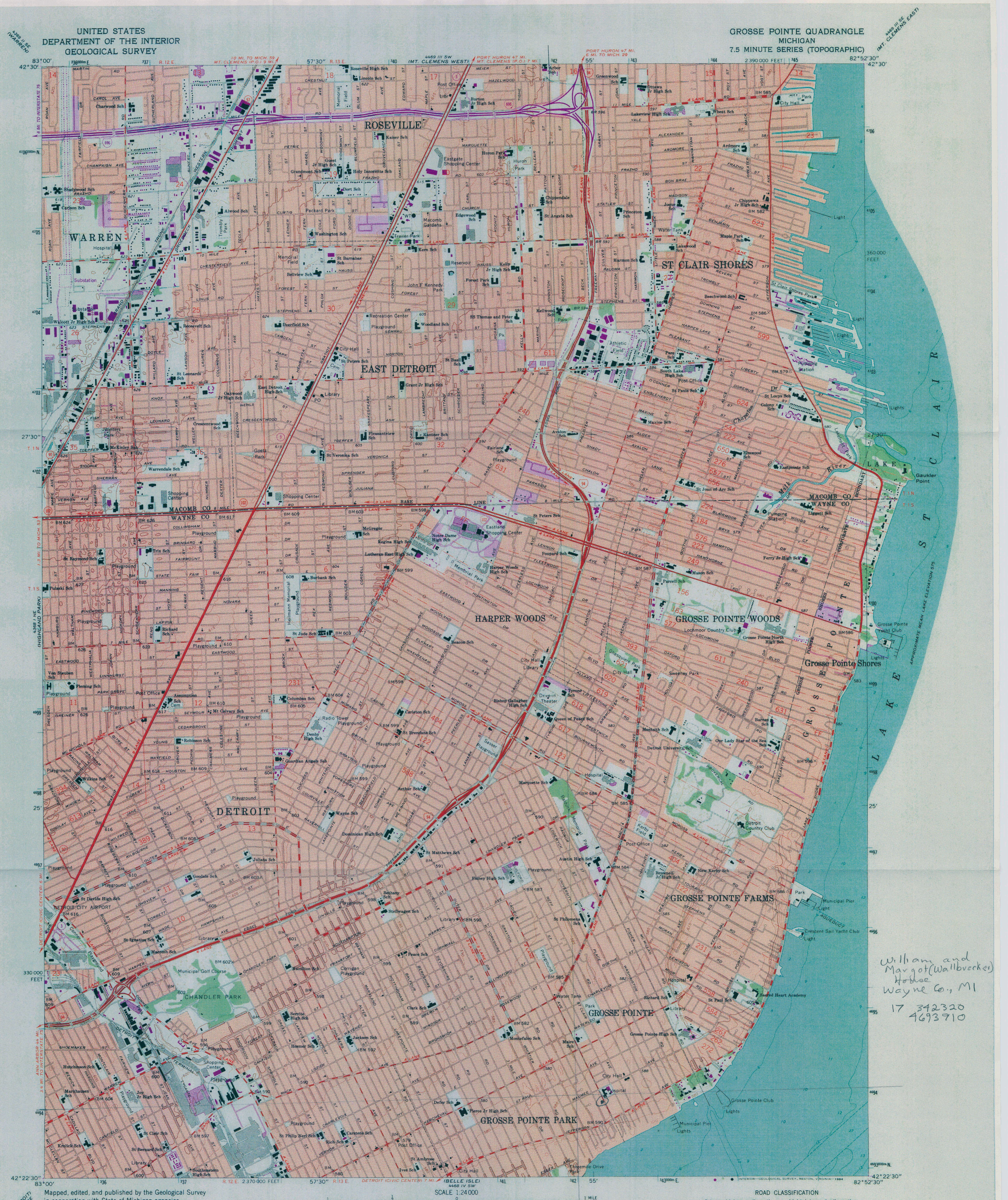
city or town Grosse Pointe Park state MI zip code 48230

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Office of Planning and Performance Management. U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
GEOLOGICAL SURVEY

GROSSE POINTE QUADRANGLE
MICHIGAN
7.5 MINUTE SERIES (TOPOGRAPHIC)


4369 II SE (WARREN)
4469 III SE (MT. CLEMENS EAST)
4469 III SW (MT. CLEMENS WEST)
42°30'
83°00'
82°52'30"
57'30"
55'
ROSEVILLE
WARREN
EAST DETROIT
ST CLAIR SHORES
HARPER WOODS
GROSSE POINTE WOODS
Grosse Pointe Shores
DETROIT
GROSSE POINTE FARMS
GROSSE POINTE
GROSSE POINTE PARK
CHANDLER PARK
DETROIT CITY AIRPORT
MACOMB CO
WAYNE CO
LAKE ST CLAIR
Gaukler Point
42°22'30"
83°00'
R. 12 E. 2 370 000 FEET
57'30"
R. 13 E.
DETROIT (CIVIC CENTER) 7 MI.
(BELLE ISLE)
4468 IV SW
(DETROIT)
4368 I SE
INTERIOR—GEOLOGICAL SURVEY, RESTON, VIRGINIA—1984
42°22'30"
82°52'30"

Mapped, edited, and published by the Geological Survey
in cooperation with State of Michigan agencies

Control by USGS, USC&GS, U. S. Lake Survey, and City of Detroit

Planimetry by photogrammetric methods from aerial photographs
Topography by planetable surveys 1938–39. Revised from aerial photographs taken 1967. Field checked 1968

Selected hydrographic data compiled from U. S. Lake Survey Chart 42 (1969). This information is not intended for navigational purposes

Polyconic projection. 1927 North American datum
10,000-foot grid based on Michigan coordinate system, south zone
1000-meter Universal Transverse Mercator grid ticks, zone 17, shown in blue

Red tint indicates areas in which only landmark buildings are shown

MN
GN
5½°
98 MILS
1°18'
23 MILS

UTM GRID AND 1983 MAGNETIC NORTH
DECLINATION AT CENTER OF SHEET

To place on the predicted North American Datum 1983, move the projection lines 8 meters west as shown by dashed corner ticks

SCALE 1:24 000

1 ½ 0 1 MILE
1000 0 1000 2000 3000 4000 5000 6000 7000 FEET
1 .5 0 1 KILOMETER

CONTOUR INTERVAL 5 FEET
NATIONAL GEODETIC VERTICAL DATUM OF 1929
DEPTH CURVES AND SOUNDINGS IN FEET—DATUM IS LOW WATER 571.7 FEET

THIS MAP COMPLIES WITH NATIONAL MAP ACCURACY STANDARDS
FOR SALE BY U. S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY, RESTON, VIRGINIA 22092
AND GEOLOGICAL SURVEY DIVISION
MICHIGAN DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES, LANSING, MICHIGAN 48909
A FOLDER DESCRIBING TOPOGRAPHIC MAPS AND SYMBOLS IS AVAILABLE ON REQUEST

QUADRANGLE LOCATION

Revisions shown in purple compiled from aerial photographs taken 1982 and other sources
This information not field checked. Map edited 1983

Purple tint indicates extension of urban area

ROAD CLASSIFICATION

Primary highway, all weather, hard surface	Light-duty road, all weather, improved surface
Secondary highway, all weather, hard surface	Unimproved road, fair or dry weather

Interstate Route U. S. Route State Route

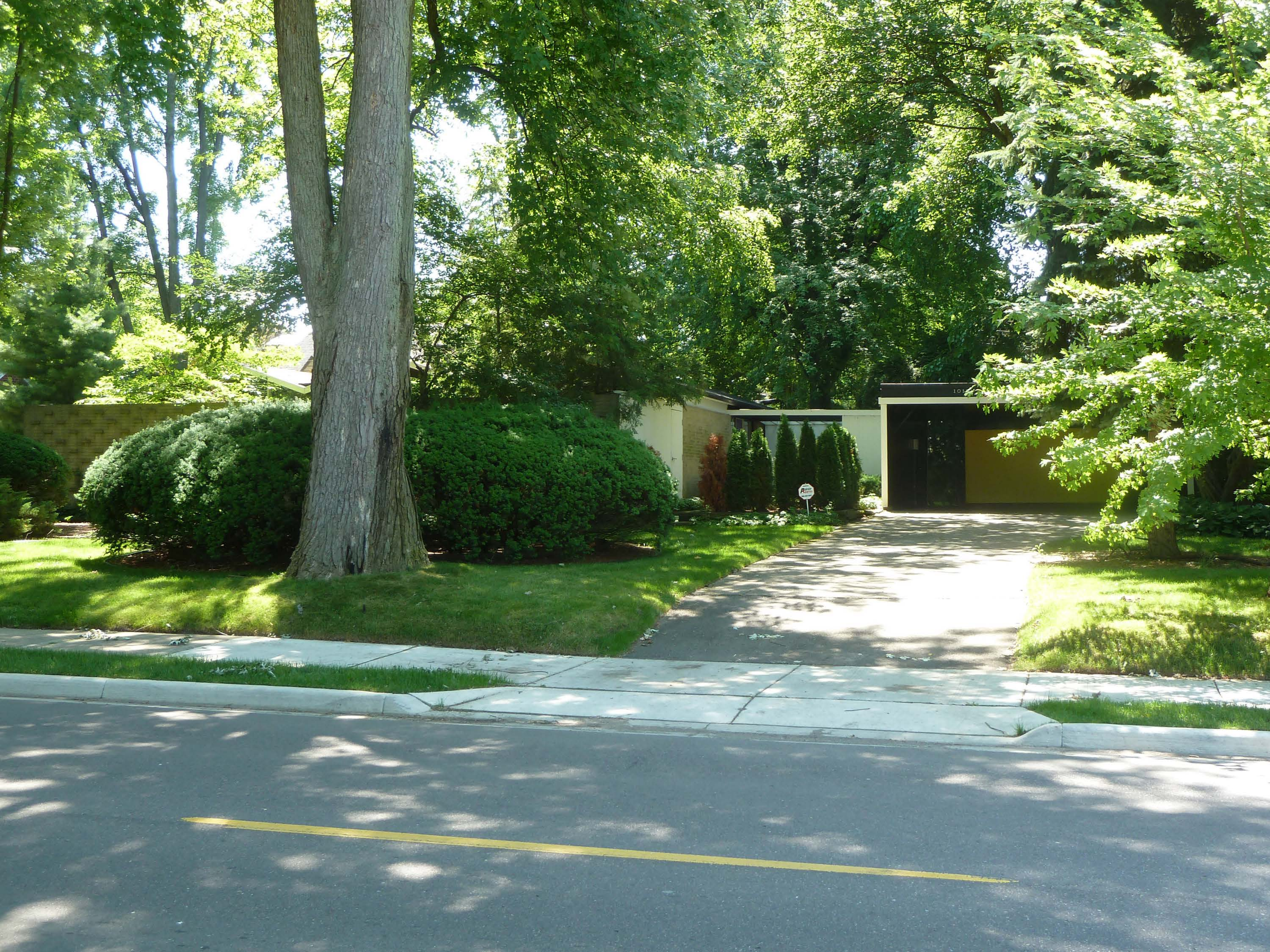
GROSSE POINTE, MICH.
N4222.5—W8252.5/7.5

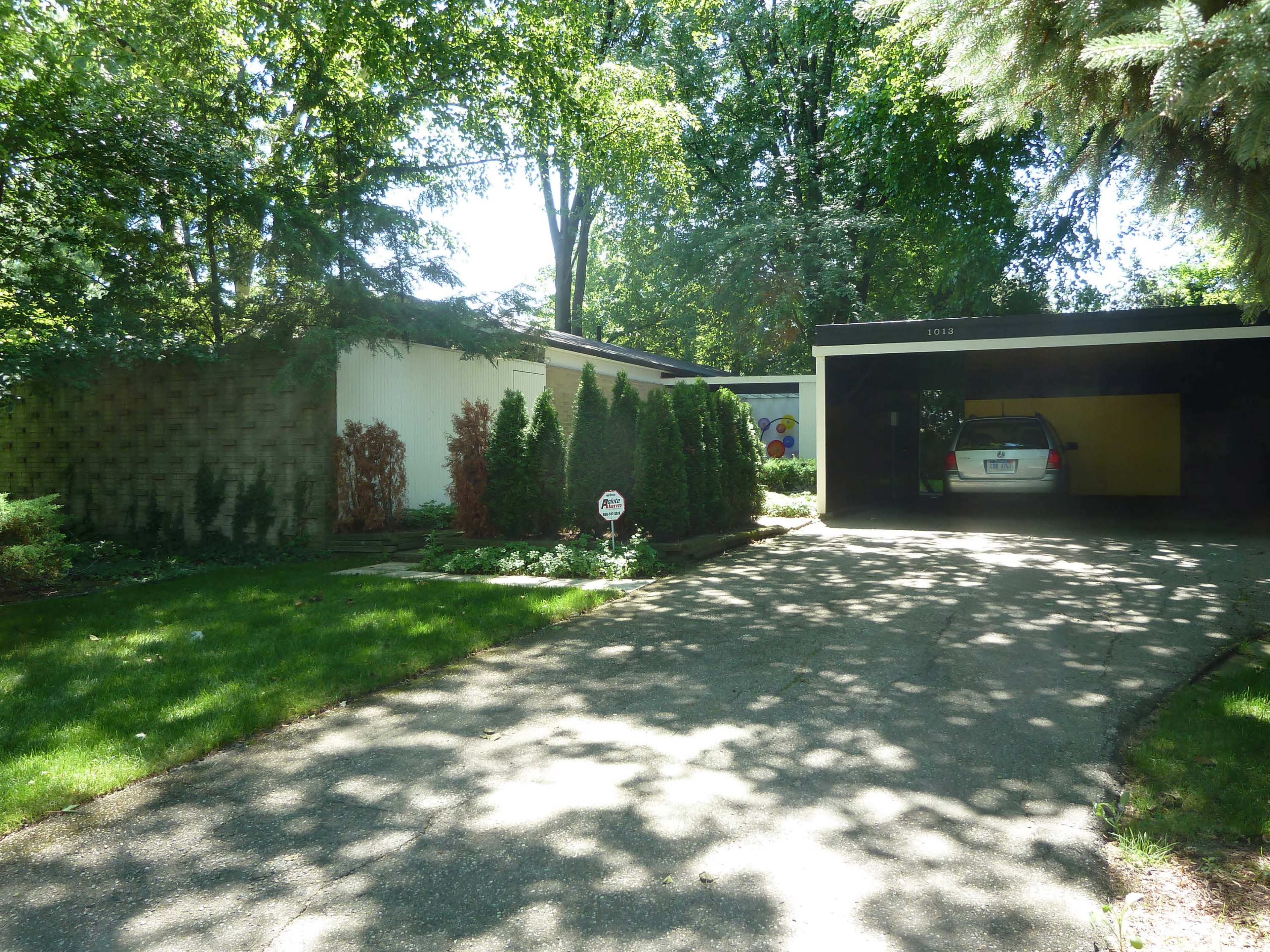
1968
PHOTOREVISED 1983
DMA 4468 IV NW—SERIES V862

RETURN TO:
USGS AND HISTORICAL MAP ARCHIVES

William and
Margot (Wallbrecker)
~~House~~
Wayne Co., MI

17 342320
4693910

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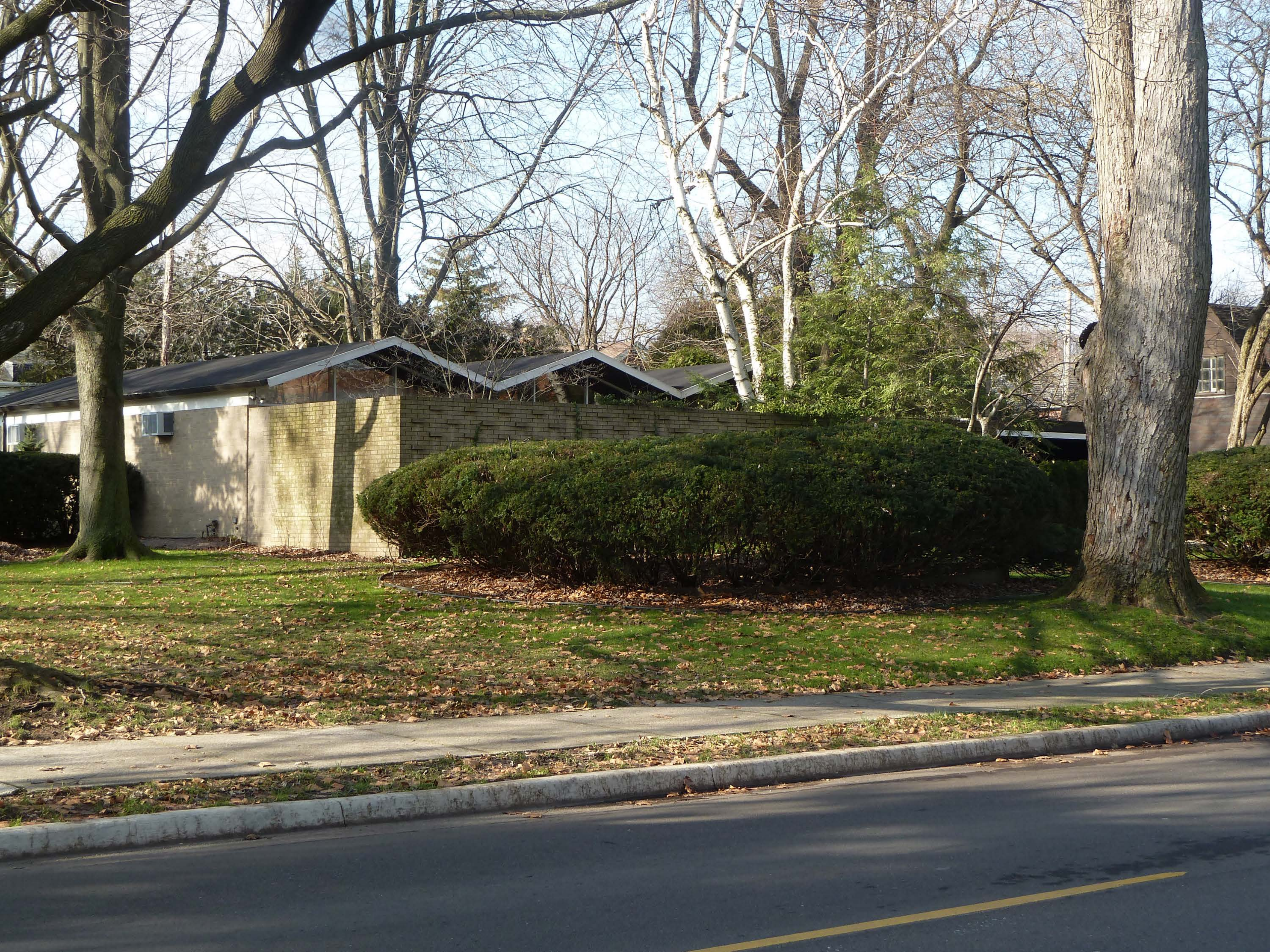
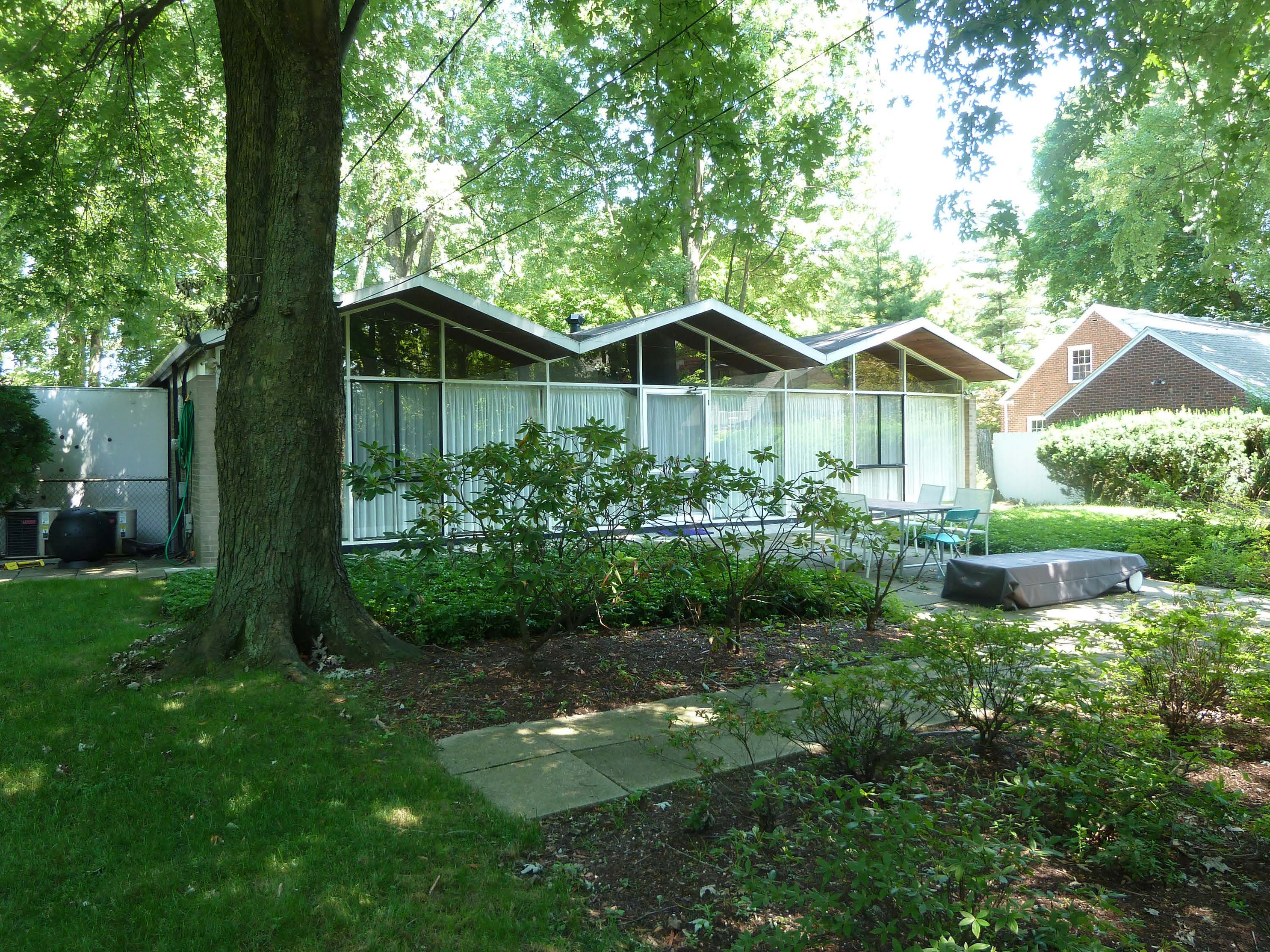
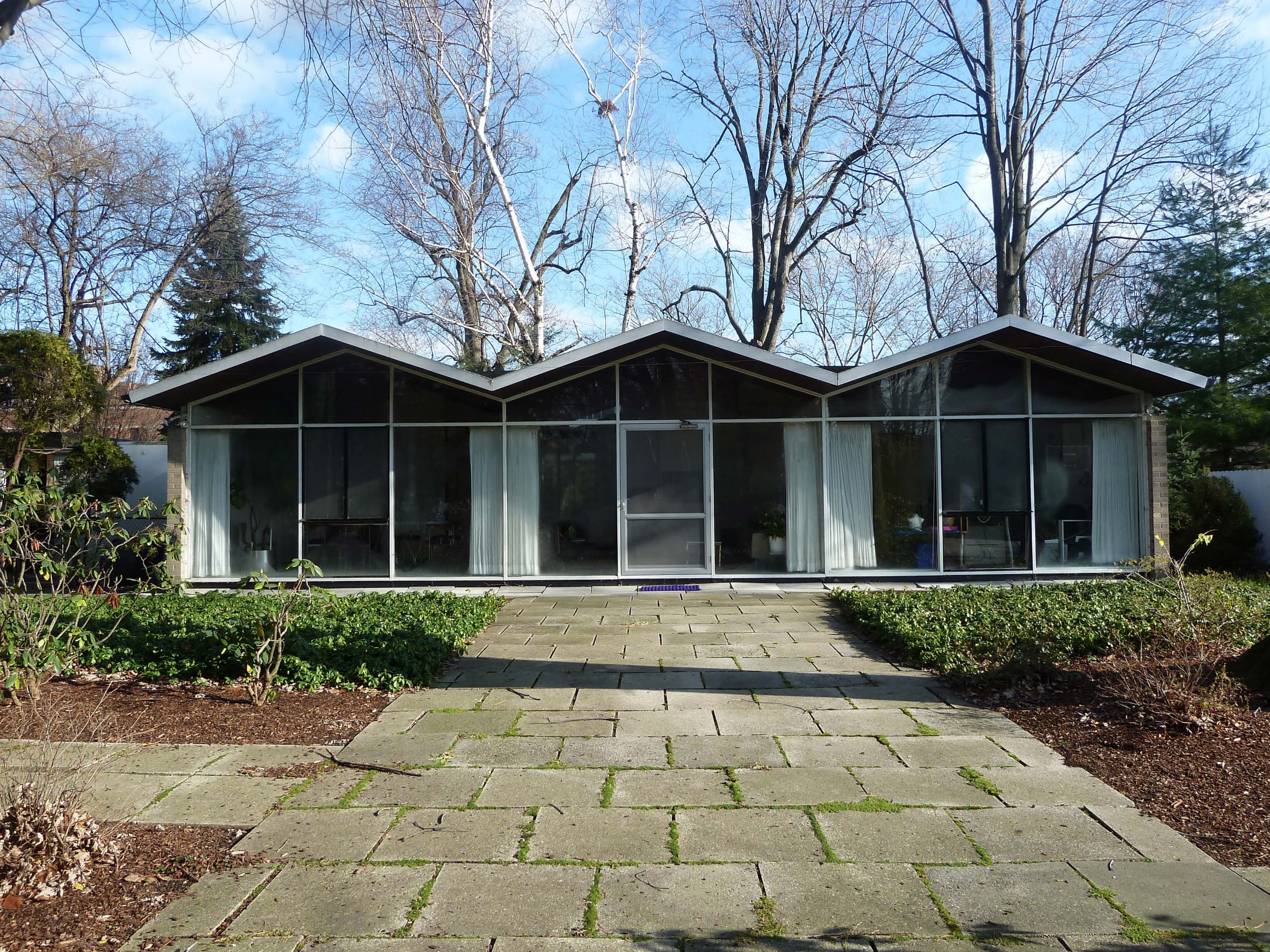
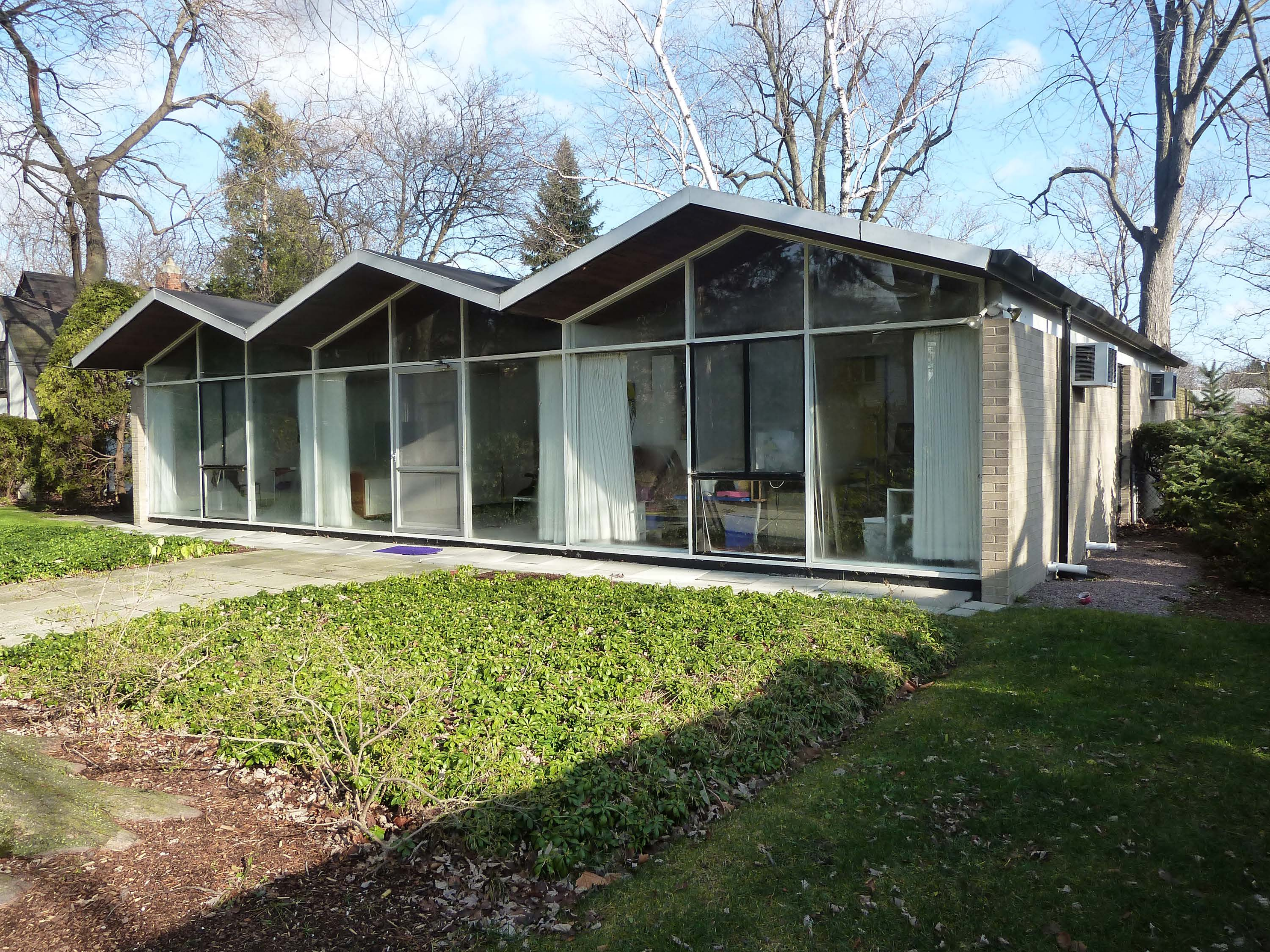
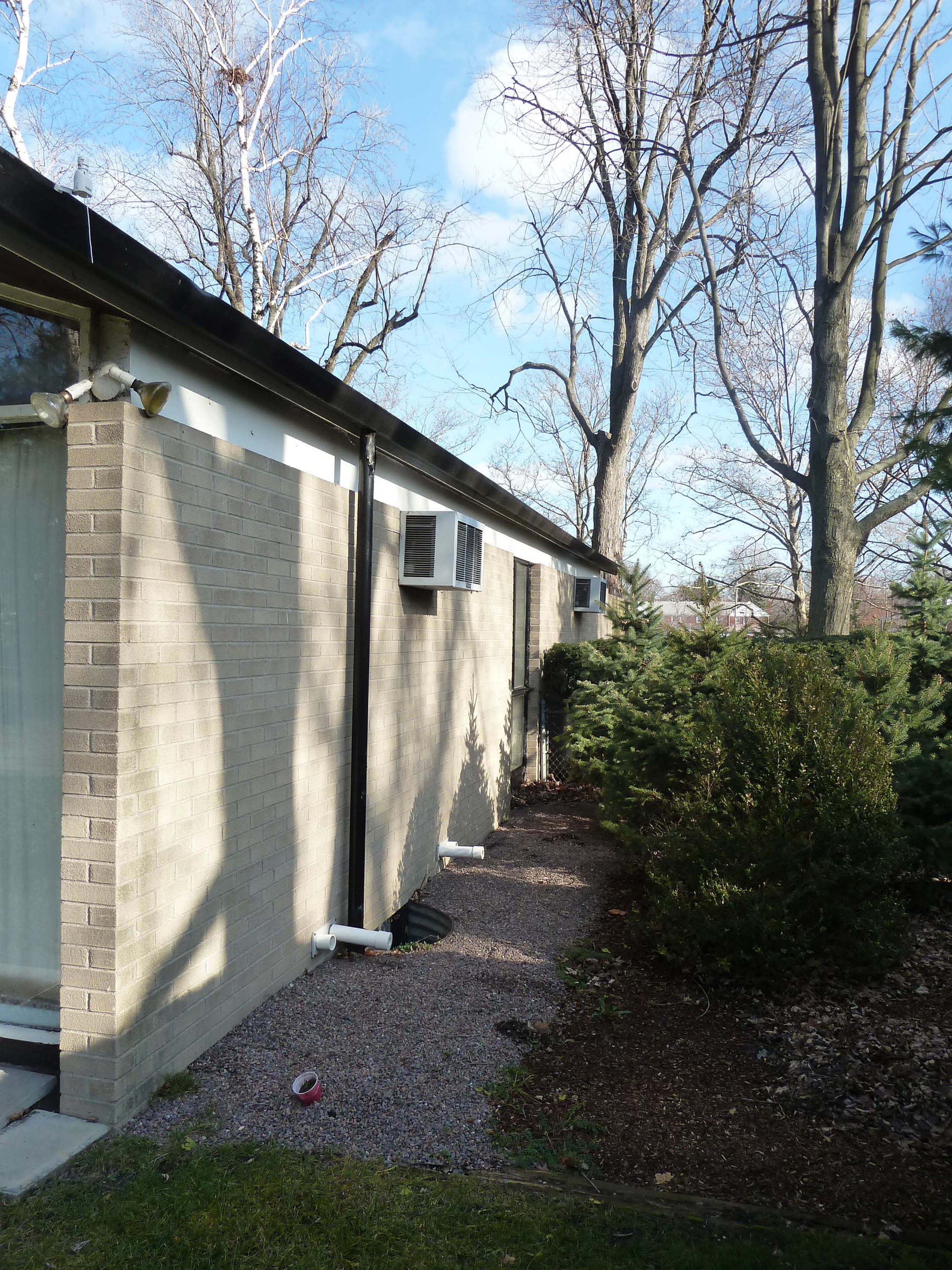
Pointe Alarm
866-537-SAFE

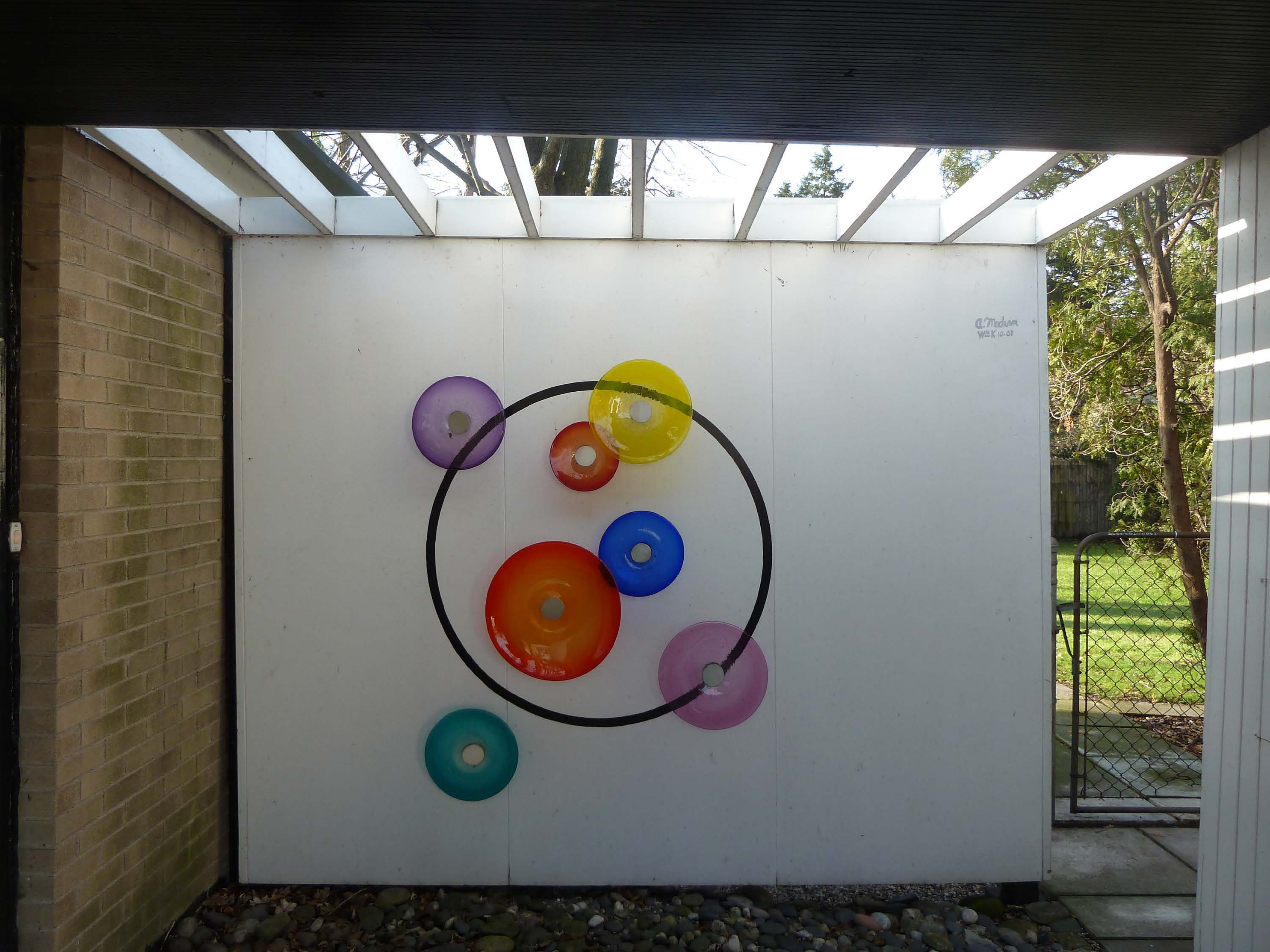








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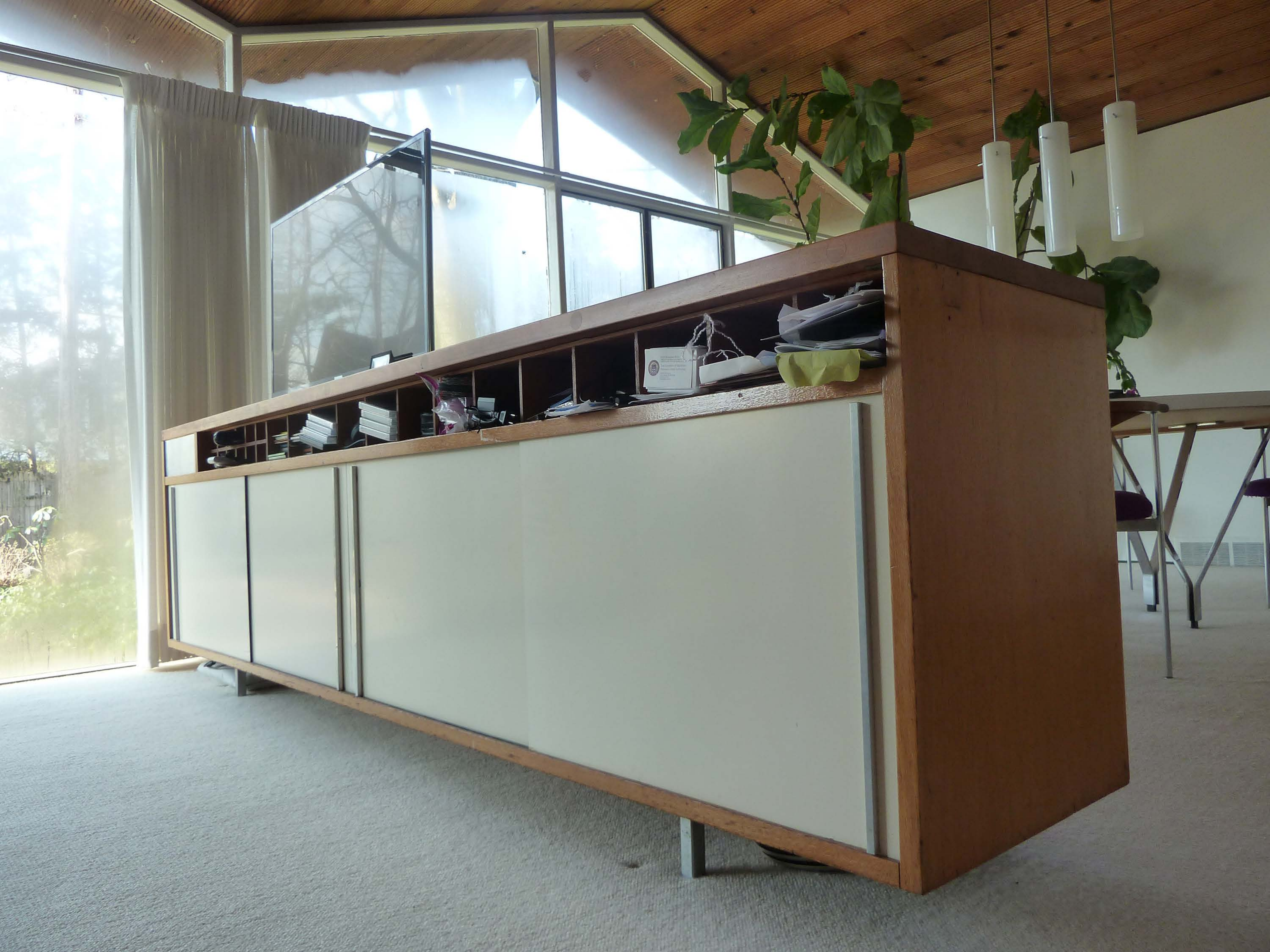
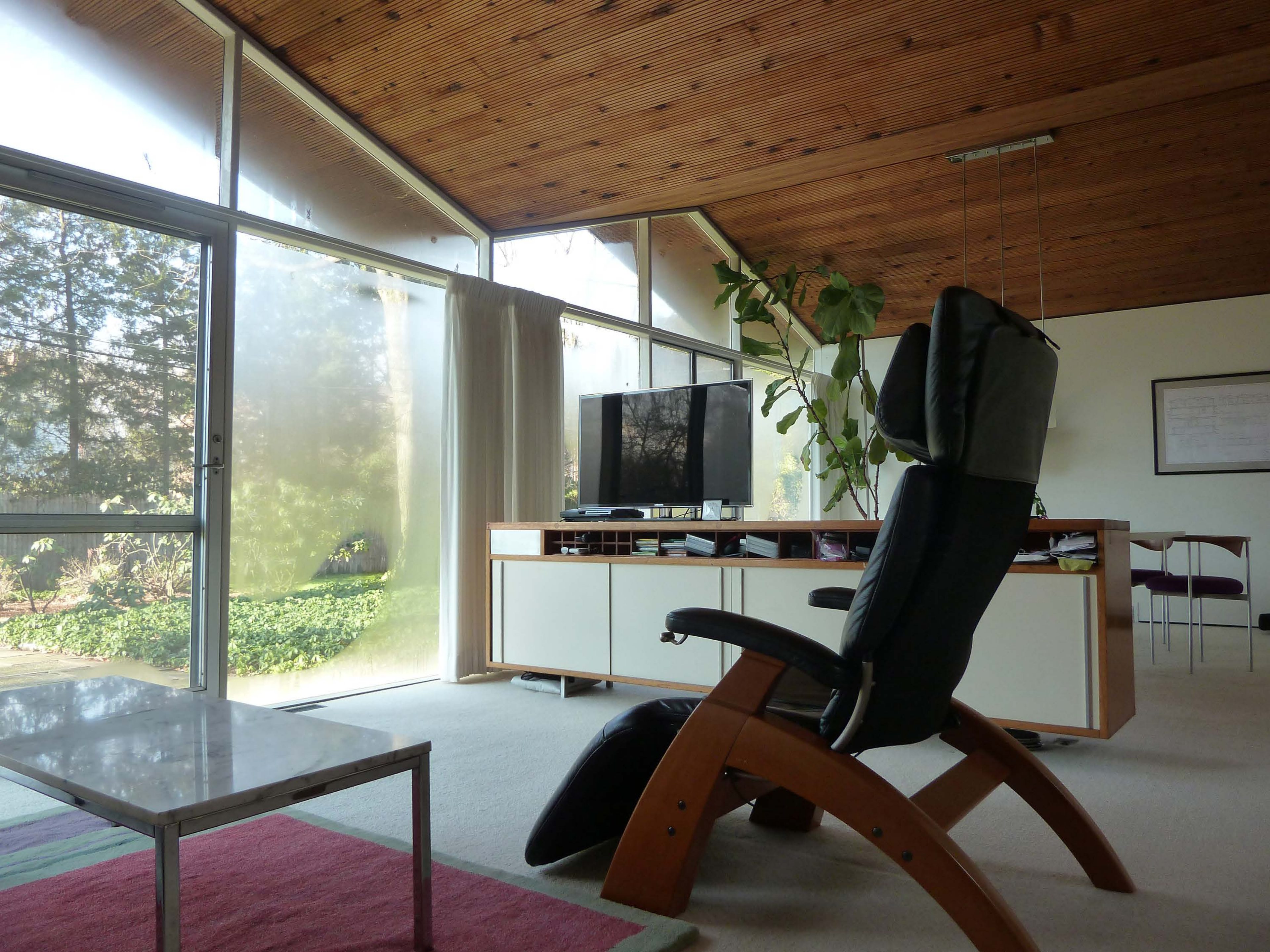
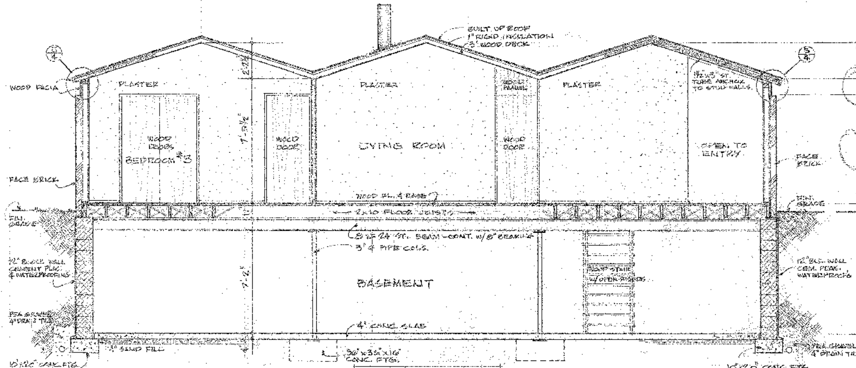
Wm K 10-01

Cuisinart



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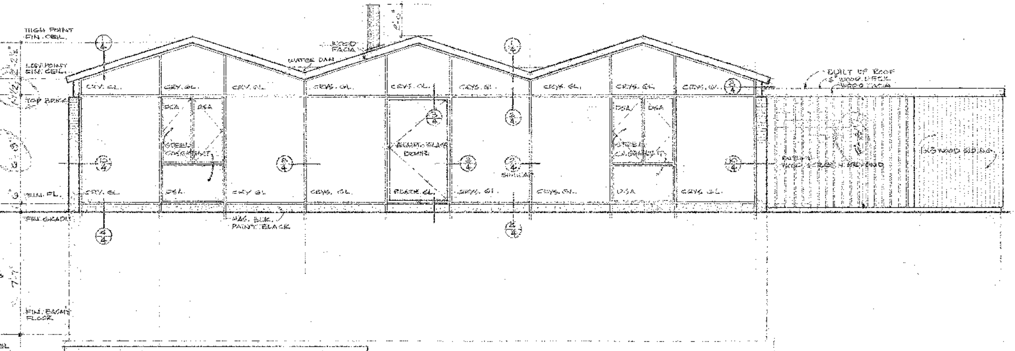
1" RIGID INSULATION
3" WOOD DECK
WOOD FACIA
PLASTER
WOOD DOOR
BEDROOM #3
LIVING ROOM
WOOD PANEL
OPEN TO ENTRY
1½x3 ST. TUBE ANCHOR TO STUD WALLS
FACE BRICK
WOOD FL. & BASE
2x10 FLOOR JOISTS
FIN. GRADE
FILL GRADE
8 I 24 ST. BEAM - CONT. W/ 8" BEARING
3" φ PIPE COLS.
12" BLOCK WALL CEMENT PLAS. & WATERPROOFING
BASEMENT
4" CONC. SLAB
4" SAND FILL
PEA GRAVEL 4" DRAIN TILE
30"x30"x16" CONC. FTG.
16"x20" CONC. FTG. W/ 2 #5 BARS

SECTION A-A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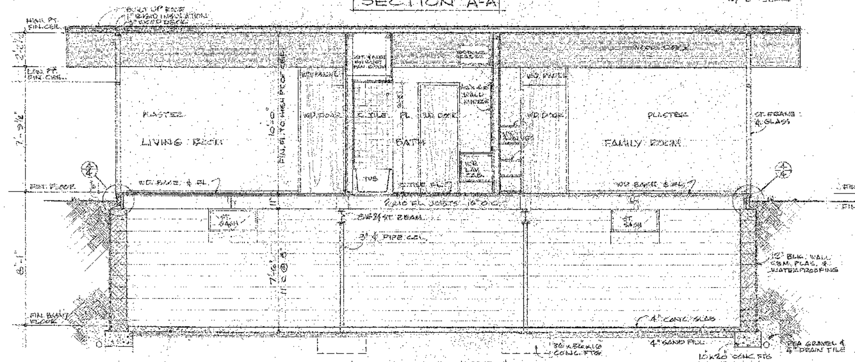
LOW POINT FIN. CEIL.
TOP BRICK
FIN. FL.
FIN. GRADE
FIN. BASMT. FLOOR
WATER DAM
WOOD FACIA
CRYS. GL.
DSA
STEEL CASEMENT
ALUM. GLASS DOOR
PLATE GL.
SIMILAR
MAS. BLK. PAINT BLACK
BUILT UP ROOF
3" WOOD DECK
WOOD FACIA
1x3 WOOD SIDING

EAST ELEVATION - WEST SIMILAR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BUILT UP ROOF
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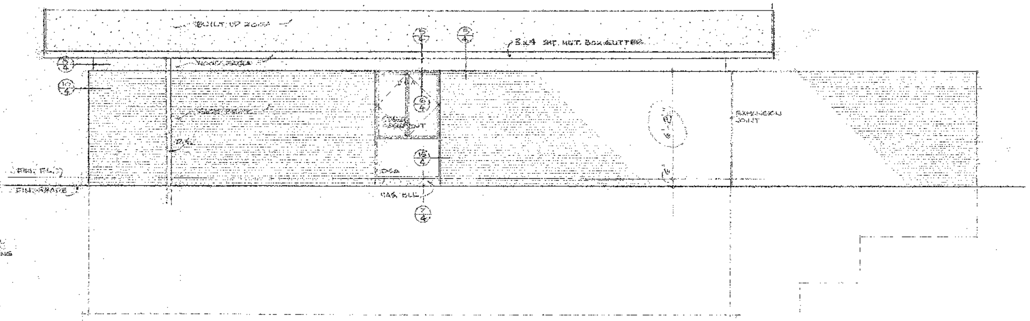
3" WOOD DECK
LOW PT. FIN. CEIL.
PLASTER
LIVING ROOM
WD. PANEL
WD. DOOR
C. TILE
PL.
BATH
TUB
LAV.
WD. DOOR
FAMILY ROOM
ST. FRAME & GLASS
FIN. FLOOR
WD. BASE & FL.
2x10 FL. JOISTS 16" O.C.
ST. SASH
8 W 24 ST. BEAM
3" φ PIPE COL.
12" BLK. WALL CEM. PLAS. & WATERPROOFING
FIN. BASMT. FLOOR
4" CONC. SLAB
4" SAND FILL
30"x30"x16" CONC. FTG.
16"x20" CONC. FTG. W/ 2 #5 BARS
PEA GRAVEL & 4" DRAIN TILE

SECTION B-B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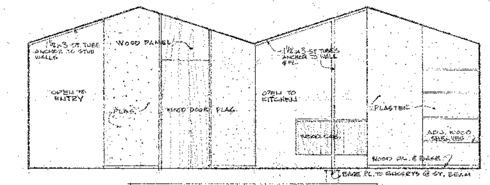
FACE BRICK
D.S.
STEEL CASEMENT
DSA
EXPANSION JOINT
FIN. FL.
FIN. GRADE
MAS. BLK.

SOUTH ELEVATION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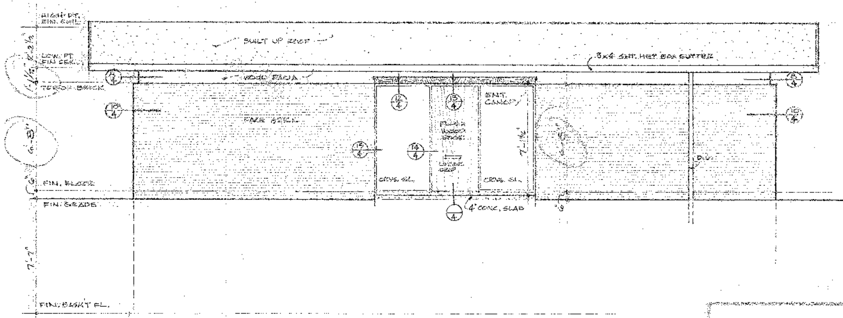
1½x3 ST. TUBES ANCHOR TO WALL & FL.
OPEN TO ENTRY
PLAS.
WOOD DOOR
PLAS.
OPEN TO KITCHEN
PLASTER
WOOD CAB.
ADJ. WOOD SHELVES
WOOD FL. & BASE
BASE PL. TO SKEWETS @ ST. BEAM

EAST WALL OF FAMILY ROOM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LOW PT. FIN. CEIL.
TERMIN BRICK
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WOOD FACIA
FACE BRICK
SHT. CANOPY
FLUSH WOOD DOOR
CRYS. GL.
D.S.
FIN. FLOOR
FIN. GRADE
4" CONC. SLAB
FIN. BASMT. FL.

NORTH ELEVATION

MEATHE, KESSLER AND ASSOCIATES, INC. ARCHITECTS

[illegible] EAST JEFFERSON AVE.
GROSSE POINTE PARK 30, MICH.
TELEPHONE: VALLEY [illegible]

KESSLER RESIDENCE

GROSSE POINTE
MICHIGAN

ELEVATIONS

DRAWN BY
Kess

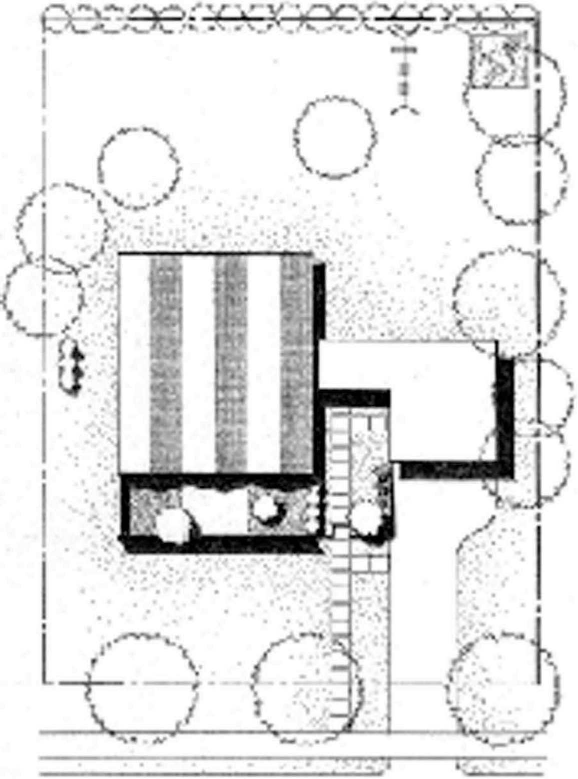
CHECKED BY
Kess

APPROVED
Kess

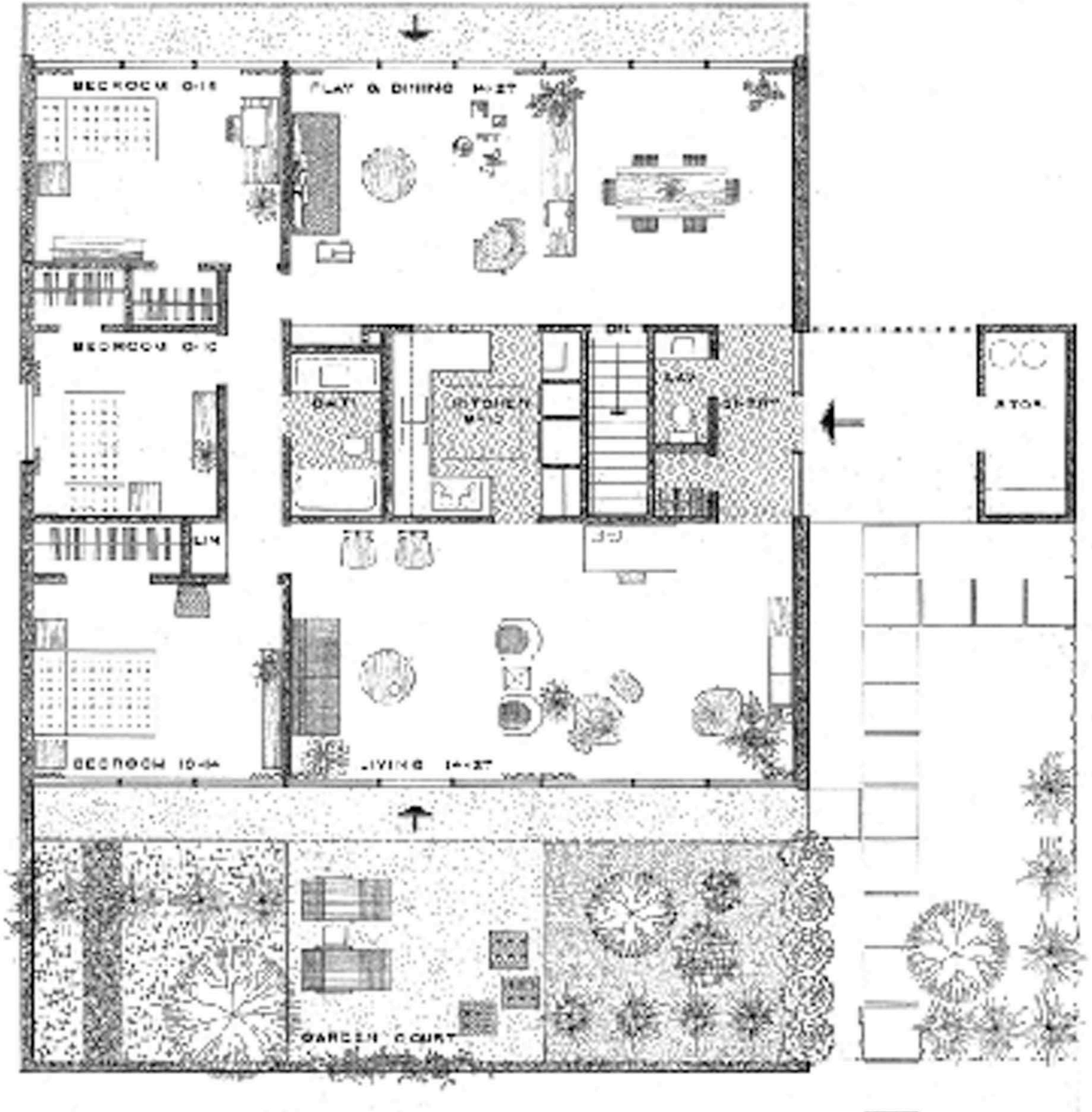
DATE
JULY 31 1958

3

JOB NO.
58-117



PLOT PLAN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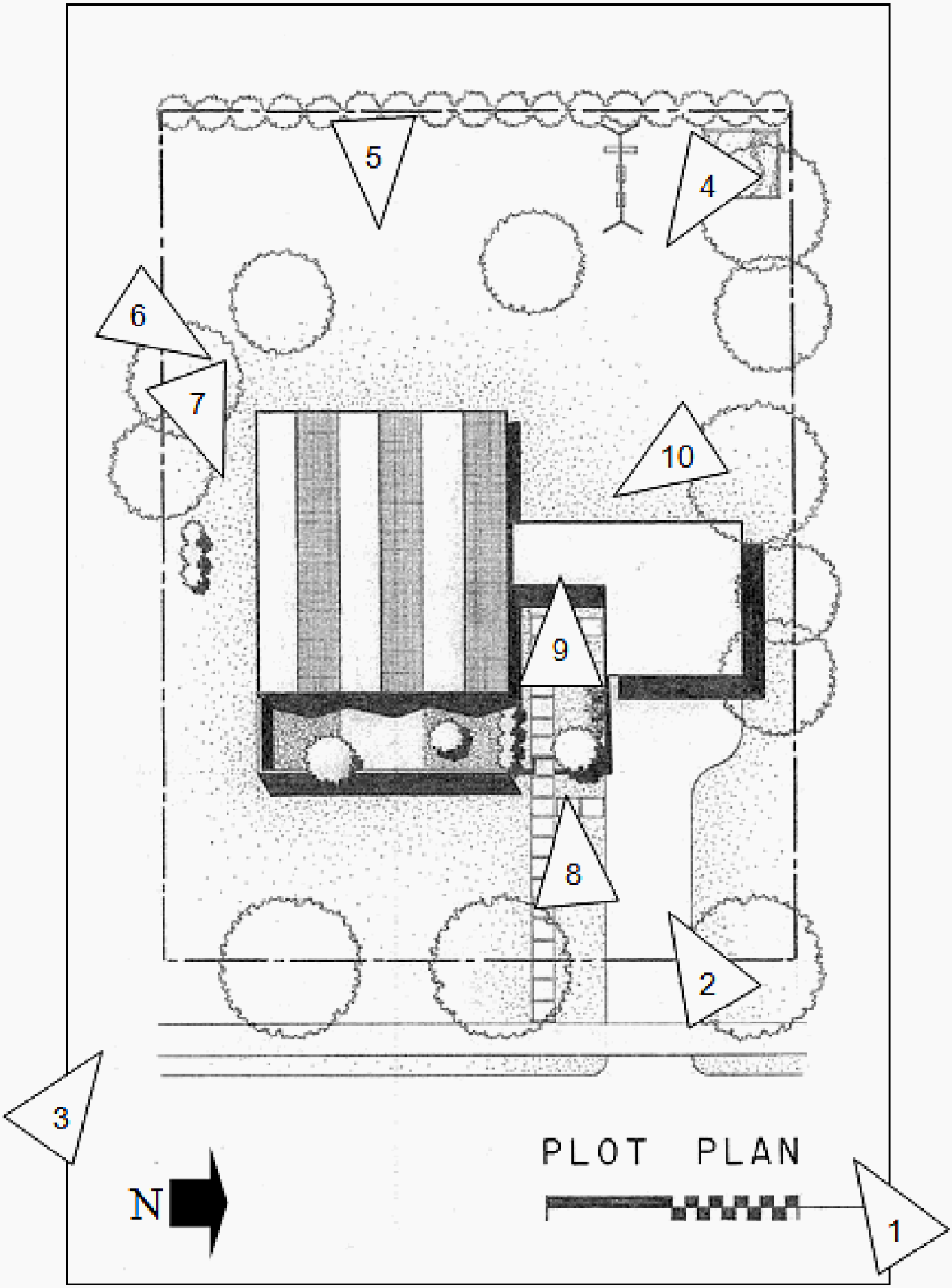
PLAY & DINING 14-27
BEDROOM 9-10
BATH
KITCHEN
DN
LAV
SERV
STOR
LIN
BEDROOM 10-14
LIVING 14-27
GARDEN COURT

FLOOR PLAN


PLOT PLAN
N